1 December 2015 - The Met Office has won the Big Data/Analytics Project of the Year at the UK IT Industry Awards 2015.

The Met Office's winning 'Space Weather Visualisation and Alerting' project is a major endorsement of the Met Office's work in the areas of big data and space weather.

The award by *Computing* and BCS, the Chartered Institute for IT, goes to a public or private sector company for the most outstanding IT project related to the management and use of 'Big Data' and the associated analytical capabilities to deliver real value in terms of organisational performance.

Chris Beighton, Met Office IT Architect, said: "The time between the solar event and impact on Earth is very small compared to terrestrial meteorology. The amount of data is very large and the window in which to identify and react to an event that might adversely affect infrastructure is critically short. This means we have to convert large amounts of complex data into a service that is useful to our customers.

"We're delighted that our work in this area has been recognised with this prestigious accolade by Computing and BCS against such tough competition from British Gas, BT and Marks & Spencer."

Ewan Haggarty, SKYNET Spacecraft Management Authority from CIS, Airbus Defence and Space and one of the specialist consumers of Met Office products said: "The potential for space weather to impact satellite communications has been significantly mitigated by the development of high-quality forecasting, both pushed to us in the format we need and also accessible through the Met Office website. Having a Met Office expert available 24/7 significantly helps us in real-time Operational decision-making."

The Met Office has been developing the IT system to support the space weather forecasting over the last four years using funding from the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS).

The project involves a complex and innovative web application. This allows our space weather forecasters to use cutting edge modelling capability to analyse solar imagery and other data to predict the impacts on earth based and satellite assets. It also automatically sends warnings to customers which gives them time to prepare and take preventative action needed to mitigate the effects of space weather events.

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